



# Committee on **HOMELAND SECURITY**

Chairman Michael McCaul

## *Opening Statement*

March 14, 2013

**Media Contacts:** Mike Rosen, Charlotte Sellmyer  
(202) 226-8417

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### **Statement of Subcommittee Chairman Richard Hudson (R-NC) Committee on Homeland Security**

#### **“TSA’s Efforts to Advance Risk-Based Security”**

**March 14, 2013  
Remarks as Prepared**

I would like to welcome everyone to the Subcommittee’s first hearing of the 113th Congress, and thank our distinguished witness for taking the time to be here today. You have a tough job, Administrator Pistole. When I visited your headquarters last month I was impressed by your operation and the team you have assembled. We appreciate your service and look forward to working with you.

The topic of today’s hearing is risk-based security, which is naturally the next step in advancing security procedures. After all, why should the federal government devote precious taxpayer dollars to low risk people, places, or things? One move Administrator Pistole has made to devote more resources to risk-based security is to remove certain items from the Prohibited Items List for passengers’ carry-on items. It’s critical that members of this committee, on both sides of the aisle, work with you as you move forward with implementation of new policy changes.

As I said, you have a difficult job and we want to support you, but we must have open and clear communication. It should be a priority for us to put a strategy together so that you are not faced with Congress pushing back against the simple, commonsense things you’re doing. Moving forward, we must help each other, in advance of major policy changes, to educate the rest of our colleagues in the House and appropriate stakeholders on the reasoning behind such decisions. This open and proactive approach will reduce pushback, like the kind we’ve seen the last couple days, and allow us all to work together on rolling out risk based security policies that directly

benefit passenger's safety, ease of travel, and ultimately make TSA a leaner more effective agency.

Understandably, immediately after 9/11, risk-based security was easier said than done. Federal agencies, including TSA, first had to figure out a way to analyze risk in a reliable way and then share and operationalize that information.

Ten years and \$65 billion dollars later, the TSA has finally begun to embrace and implement risk-based security at airport checkpoints. It's been a long time coming.

Those of us familiar with the progress TSA has made towards risk-based security over the last two years are grateful for it. Programs like Pre-Check are an encouraging step in the right direction. Just last month I had the opportunity to visit the Charlotte airport and see their impressive operation first hand. But the fact is TSA still has a long way to go to improve its effectiveness and its efficiency.

My constituents back home in North Carolina recognize that the terrorist threat requires us to remain vigilant in our daily lives, patient when it comes to the security measures we are forced to undergo at airports, and understanding of the enormous resources required to keep us safe.

Just like ordinary Americans, Washington must continue to tighten its belt and learn to do more with less. Seeking out efficiencies is imperative when the federal government is carrying over \$16 trillion in public debt and every day borrows over \$4 billion just to pay down interest on the debt. We must find ways to come together over common sense savings that are bipartisan and practical at all levels of government and TSA is no exception.

In my view, if TSA implements risk-based security in a responsible way, it could be a win-win for our security and our economy. First, it takes the focus off lower risk individuals, like the elderly and disabled children. Second, it gives TSA the opportunity to evolve its procedures and reduce its long-term operational costs.

With the privilege of serving in the Congress and as Chair of this Subcommittee, cutting unnecessary and wasteful government spending is one of my top priorities.

To that end, I have four primary objectives for the Subcommittee this Congress:

1. Advancing risk-based security programs and policies, which is of course the topic of today's hearing,
2. Addressing technology procurement flaws,
3. Streamlining TSA's regulatory process, and

4. Strengthening collaboration with the private sector.

I would love to see TSA succeed on all of these fronts and think that under Administrator Pistole they have taken meaningful steps in the right direction. I will do everything in my power to assist in this process and part of that means asking tough questions and occasionally offering criticism. While we may not agree all of the time, I view opportunities like today as a chance to work together to do what is right for the American people.

As we interact in the coming years, I look forward to continuing a productive conversation with our witness, Administrator Pistole, stakeholders inside and out of government, Ranking Member Richmond, and the bipartisan Members of this Subcommittee on the difficult issues that we face.

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